



O'Neills® + ULSTER GAA

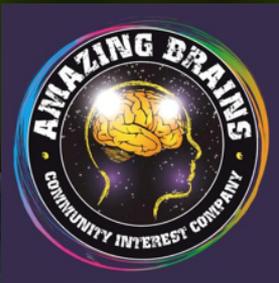
COACHING AND GAMES DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

Starting on the Front Foot

Mental
Preparation
For
Peak Performance
Chris Lynch



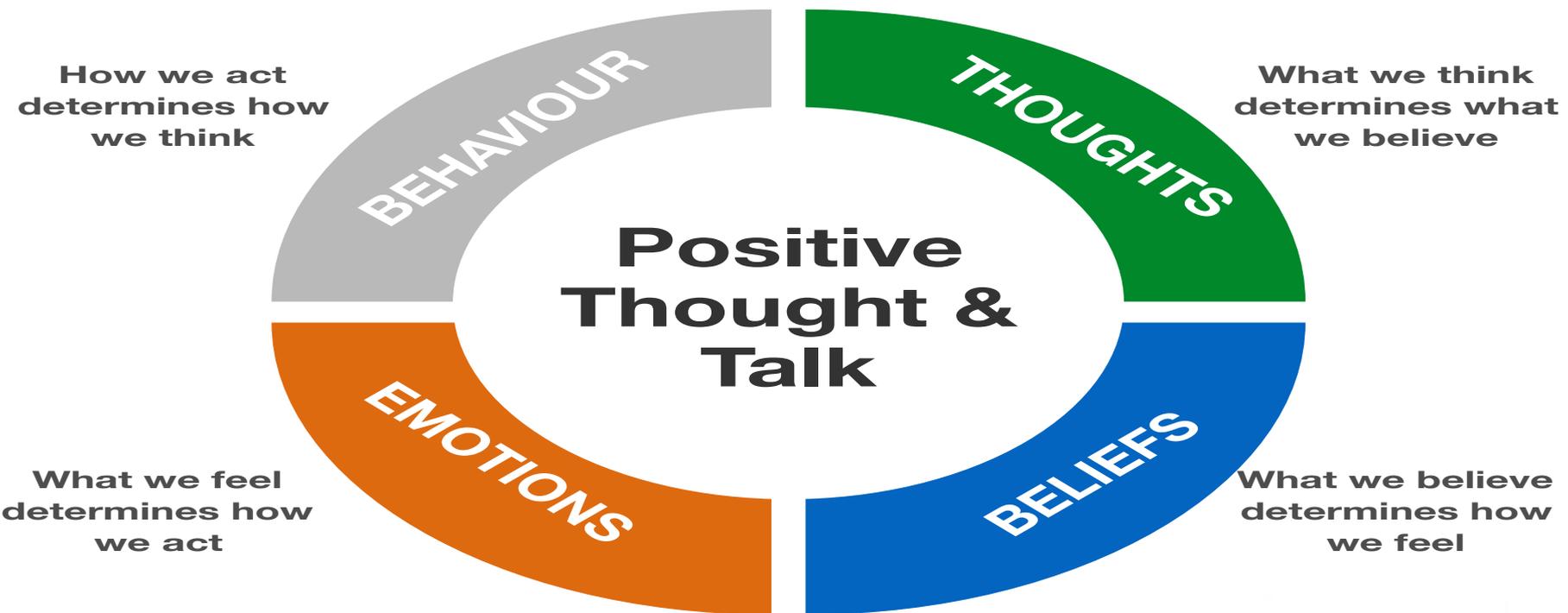
WWW.ULSTER.GAA.IE



O'Neills + ULSTER GAA
COACHING AND GAMES
DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



Thinking Cycle





Activating the Brain



Activate
Warm-Up



Aims of this Workshop

1. To highlight the role & benefits that mental preparation plays in sustaining peak performances
2. To provide information from applied sports psychology and relate towards performance in hurling
3. To offer practical, applicable examples of mental practices for coaches & players





A Coaches View of Big Game Prep

"The week will have been cerebral rather than physical, ensuring that the 23 players in each team have total clarity on unit and individual roles and have a full tank going into the game."

"Each individual player will have taken some time to view his own game and his opponent's to sharpen his mind to what he needs to win the individual contest. Then it is about rehearsal, practising what is required as an individual, as a unit, and as a team."

Graham Henry - (Rugby World Cup Winning Manager, New Zealand All-Blacks)



Table 1
Examples of Mental Training Tool Periodization

Mental Training Tool	Recovery	Preparatory	Competitive	Peaking
Volume Intensity Imagery	Moderate to Low Moderate to Low Vividness, controllability, sensory awareness, internal and external imagery	High Low Pre-practice and pre-competition imagery, post-practice and post-competition imagery	Moderate Moderate On-site imagery, imagery during preperformance routines, peak performance imagery, upcoming event imagery	Low High Peak event imagery, imagery during pre-performance routine, strategy/game plan imagery, coping imagery
Self-Talk	Develop self-talk script, identify negative self-talk patterns, self-talk awareness exercises	Read script before practice and competition, thought stopping during practice, record negative competitive thoughts	Disputing negative thoughts using counterarguments, thought stopping during competition, self-talk cues	Dispute negative thoughts on-site, revise and read script for major event, event-specific self-talk cues, positive affirmation training
Relaxation	Diaphragmatic breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, stress awareness exercises	Relaxation training with conditioned cues, daily relaxation practice during targeted stressful periods	Rapid relaxation during practice and competition, relaxation during pre-performance routine	On-site relaxation, functional relaxation during major event, relaxation during pre-performance routine
Goal Setting	Long-term goals, intermediate goals, technical goals, conditioning goals	Short-term goals, daily practice goals, goal action plans	Short-term and daily practice goals, competition goals, tactical goals, goals for positive mental attitude	Major event strategy goals, major event performance goals, major event positive mental attitude goals, corresponding practice goals

From Holliday et al, 2008





Controlling the Controllable's

“Our performance depends on so many factors, only some of which we can control. What I can control is my mind and what I mentally bring to the starting line.”

(Bonnie Blair- 6 Time Olympic medal winner: Speed skating)





Discussion

1. What are the processes involved for athletes concerned with performance enhancement?
2. When two athletes are equally matched in physical ability, what factor(s) will determine success?
3. Why are some athletes consistently able to perform well under pressure and others are unable to cope?





Components of Peak Performance

PHYSICAL

TACTICAL

TECHNICAL

PSYCHOLOGICAL

LIFESTYLE





Psychological Elements to Performance

Emotional Control

Self-Confidence

Reaction Time

Attentional Control

Resilience

Decision Making

Instinct

Verbal Communication

Body Language

Creativity

Attitude

Motivation

Cohesion

Skill Execution

...and more





Why Preparation for Peak Performance?

- Develop an edge that enables players to effectively manage their own performance roadmap
- Give players the platform to manage potentially dysfunctional performance distractions
- Develop rituals (& transferrable skills) essential to managing stress, conflict and anxiety all of which are dysfunctional to performance on and away from sport
- Improve motivation, confidence and assertiveness of players and coaches by self-regulating and self-managing.





Growing Pains & Mental Well-Being

WHAT WERE THE KEY FINDINGS?

40% of students in 2014-2015 stated that they have had to repeat an entire academic year, higher than the approximate 6% rate across all students reported by the Higher Education Authority (HEA). 55% of student county players stated that they would like more college

50% are often overwhelmed by their commitments
56% would like more college

Joe Brolly reveals the worrying state of burnout among young players in the GAA

Long-term injuries could be on the horizon for underage players



OFF THE BALL

Welcome to your preview of the Sunday Times

HOME / NEWS / WORLD

NEWS

Stressed-out GAA players 'need help'

Siobhan Maguire

GAA teams should use sports psychologists, according to doctors who have found that anxiety is a hidden injury that is preventing leading players from performing at their best.



Female GAA players overwhelmed and stressed, says WGPA survey

Friday, January 02, 2015

By Mary White

Many female GAA players have felt 'stressed' due to their playing commitments, according to the findings of a survey by new Women's GPA (WGPA)



competitions ranked top and club in terms of importance to players. 41% of players said inter-county competitions were most important while only 1% rated college as most important. 87% of GPA student members rated the college competitions as third preference in terms of importance after county and club.

61% would like more time for family and friends



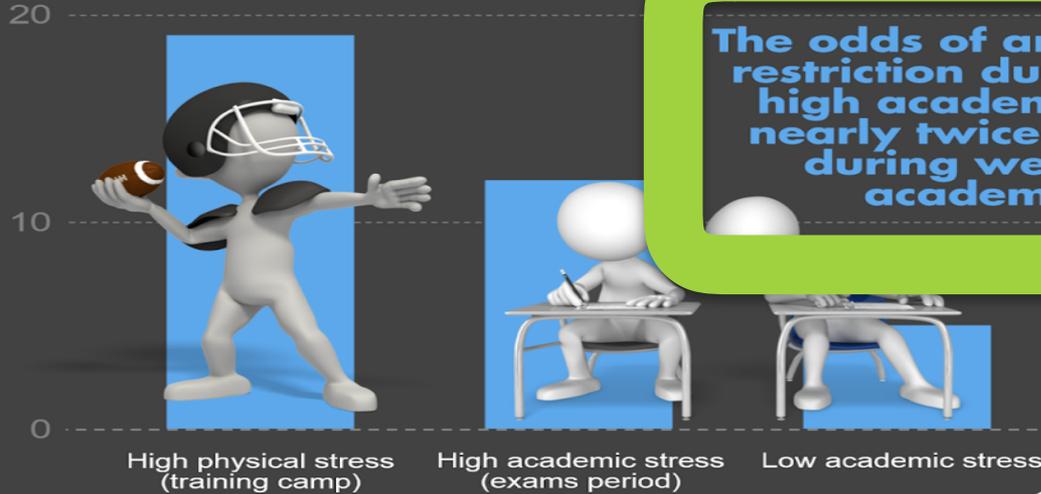


Stress, illness and injury in college football players

Designed by



Injury / illness restrictions



The odds of an injury/illness restriction during weeks of high academic stress are nearly twice as high than during weeks of low academic stress



Reference

The effect of physical and academic stress on illness and injury in division 1 college football players by Bryan Mann et al. in J Strength Cond Res, May 2015





Self-Regulation is Key

Self-regulation involves behavioural control and planning, and is conscious, deliberative and goal directed.

Hagger 2010

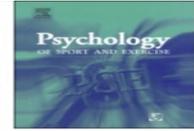




Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Psychology of Sport and Exercise

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/psychsport



Metacognitive processes in the self-regulation of performance in elite endurance runners



Noel Brick*, Tadhg MacIntyre, Mark Campbell

- Athletes often reported using metacognitive skills e.g. planning cognitive strategies prior to competitive running
- Both successful elite runners engaged in planning pre-competition.
- Both internal and external distractors may be minimised as a result.
- Athletes also reported planning with significant others, such as coaches and psychologists to assist proactive control.



Sports Scholar Commitments

(Liverpool John Moores University Sports Scholars 2014)

On field	Off Field			
	Sport	Education	Work	Lifestyle
Team/Group training	Strength and conditioning Yoga/Pilates	Attending University	Shifts	Nutrition
Individual training (Technical, Stamina, Speed, Skill Acquisition)	Physiotherapy	University work and assignments & Research	Events	Family events Birthdays Time with friends Social Events
Competitions	Team Meetings	Personal Development Courses/Workshops	Work placement	Holidays
	Psychological Development (MST, Support, Performance Planning)	Exams	Media/promotional Commitments	Religious Practice
T	O	U	R	S





A Little Exercise...

How many hours on average per week do you spend...

- Attending Class
- Studying (Library, home etc)
- Working (internship, PT/FT job)
- Traveling (to and from class) weekday
- Attending team training, games, competition
- Additional Exercise Classes (yoga, spin...)
- Prepping, Cooking & Eating Food
- Social Events
- Personal care (showering? getting ready for night out?)
- Watching TV
- Sleeping
- Cleaning, laundry etc
- Caring for family
- Surfing the net (facebook), videogames, etc
- Leisure activities (reading, etc)
- Other

1. Add them up
2. Where are the priority hours?
3. What are your actual priorities?
4. Do they match?





Priorities This Week
Talk with Sports Psychologist Tues & Thurs
Yoga and Relaxation with Yoga instructor
Food Diary
Work on Running style (Extra Squats in Gym)
"Giving Back" Training with Minor Panel

Goals
Game time in all League Games (on track)
Short Term: Make 37 Panel (Achieved)
Starting 15 Championship 2014
Provincial Win. "Walk the steps"
All Ireland Win.

11

Week 11 - 2014 Season	Week of 22/02/14
Sunday 22/02	Training Weekend (away) Details as Wednesday
Monday 23/02	Gym 7.00 am. Assessment. Breakfast - Bacon, Scrambled Eggs, Breads - Water (Fish Oil Sup.) Lunch - Salads, Cold Cuts, Fruit - Water Dinner - Chicken Stir Fry, Water. YoGa
Tuesday 24/02	Breakfast - Porridge, Protein Shake - Water (Fish Oil Sup.) Lunch - Chicken, Vegetables. - Water Team field session 7.00pm Dinner - Potatoes, Beef, Veg tables, Water & Fruit.
Wednesday 25/02	Gym 7.00 am. New Program. Breakfast - Poached Eggs, Chicken - Water (Fish Oil Sup.) Lunch - Cesar Salad - Water Dinner - Fish Cakes, Boiled Potatoes & Veg - Water
Thursday 26/02	Breakfast - Porridge with Flaxseed, Protein Shake - Water (Fish Oil Sup.) Lunch - Turkey, Vegetables and Rice - Water Team - field session 7.00pm Dinner - Chicken & Pasta - Water
Friday 27/02	Gym 7.00 am Breakfast - Scrambled Eggs & Bacon - Water (Fish Oil Sup.) Lunch - Tuna Salad, Water. Dinner - Baked White Fish, Vegetables, Water. R&R (Tickets for O2)
Saturday 28/02	Breakfast - Oats/Fruit, Brown Bread, Juice, Water. (Fish Oil Sup.) Team - field session 11.00am Lunch - Cottage Pie, Breads - Water Dinner - Beef Steak (Med-Rare), Potatoes, Vegetables, Water.

[Week 10 - Look Back]

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Physical							
Mood							

Good Example

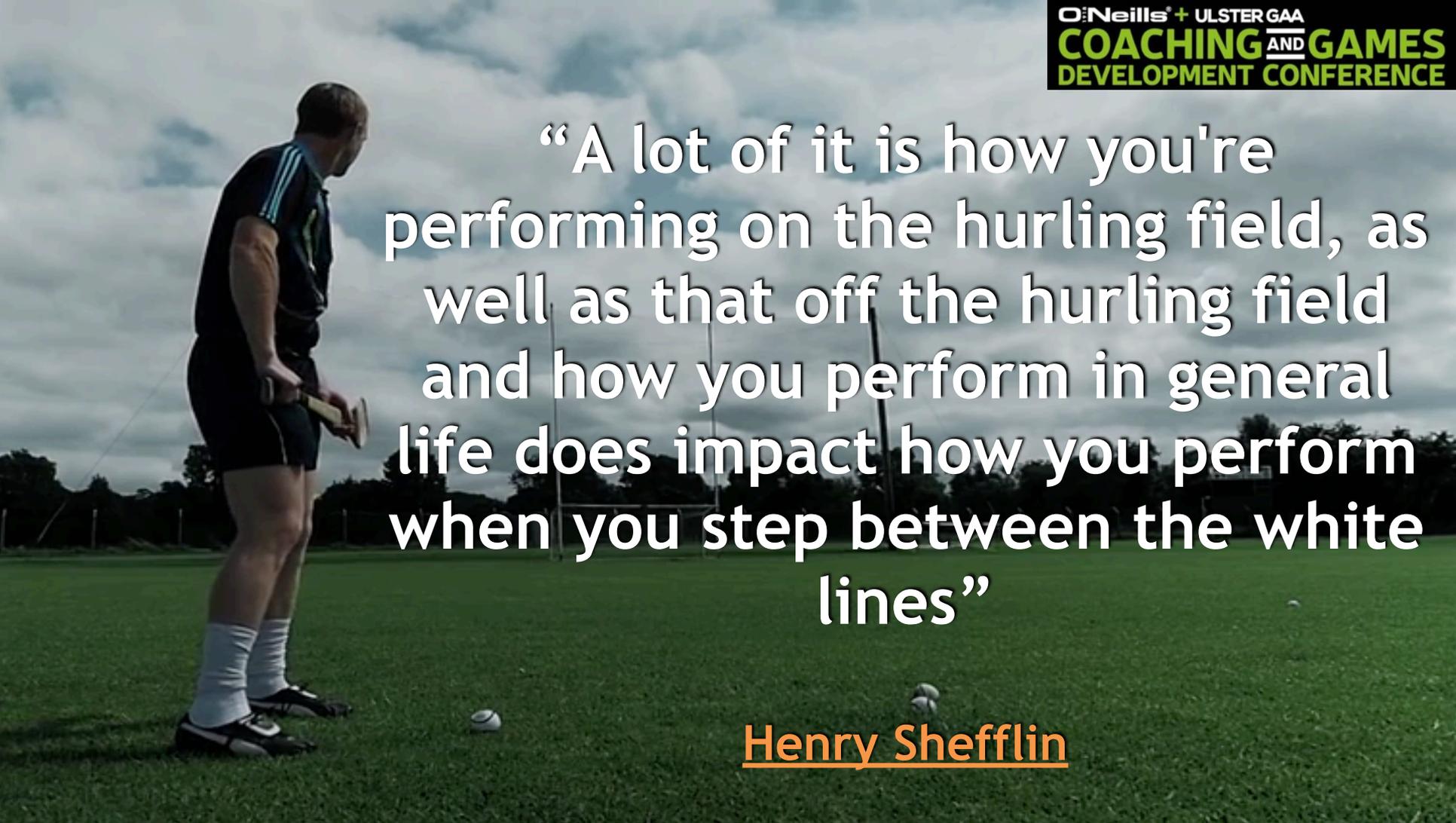
Source:
Ray Boyne @Analysis
GAA



Conflict Management

Month	Week Beginning	Major events (Coms/ training camps etc)	Education / work commitments - key dates (Exams, assignments, work deadlines, holidays, etc.)	Potential Conflict Areas?	Conflict Resolution Strategy?
Apr	29 Mar				
	7				
	14				
	21				
	28				
May	5				
	12				
	19				
	26				
June	2				
	9				
	16				
	23				
	30				





“A lot of it is how you're performing on the hurling field, as well as that off the hurling field and how you perform in general life does impact how you perform when you step between the white lines”

Henry Shefflin



Pre-
Performance
Preparation



Mindset Preparation Rituals

Best Games & Why

Signature Strengths

Required Key Performance Behaviours (KPB's)

Positive Affirmations

'If...Then' Challenge Responses

Visualisation/Imagery

Performance Goals/Statistics

Physical Conditioning Routines

Pre-Performance Routine

Roles/Responsibilities





Mental Preparation Example



Your Individual Mission



Your Best Games:

Confidence

Your Mission: (tackles, dispossessions, passes, support runs, passes):

Role-Clarity
Goals

Mentally and emotionally how you want to perform:

Emotional control
Behavioural matching

Mental Warm UP: Rituals that you will use to ensure that you are in your Ideal Performance State for this game:

IZOF (Hanin: 1997, 2000)

Individual Zone of Optimal Functioning



Putting it in Black & White

"You need to go through the same preparation every week, where your body and mind starts to understand there's a big event coming up, By the time the whistle sounds for kickoff, you're ready to go...It complements a lot of the physical stuff you do."

Brad Smith

(Assistant coach - New Zealand Rugby World Cup Winners 2011, 2015 & Former All Black Player)





Discussion

1. What are the processes involved for athletes concerned with performance enhancement?
2. When two athletes are equally matched in physical ability, what factor(s) will determine success?
3. Why are some athletes consistently able to perform well under pressure and others are unable to cope?





Aims of Mental Preparation?

The ability of the athlete to:

- a) hone psychological strategies under deliberate training accompanied by specific goals,
- b) constantly self-monitor and self-evaluate performance
- c) effectively manage one's thoughts, feelings and actions

(Ericsson, Krampe & Tesch-Romer, 1993).





O'Neills® + ULSTER GAA COACHING AND GAMES DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAM MEMBERS WANTED!



WWW.ULSTER.GAA.IE



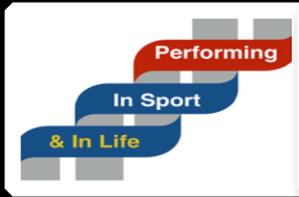
Thank You



Chris Lynch M.Sc

Elevate2Perform@gmail.com

www.chrislynchperform.wordpress.com



@CLSportPsych



CL Sports Psych



References & Further Reading

Hagger, Martin S. "Self-regulation: An important construct in health psychology research and practice." *Health Psychology Review* 4.2 (2010): 57-65.

Brick, N., MacIntyre, T., & Campbell, M. (2015). Metacognitive processes in the self-regulation of performance in elite endurance runners. *Psychology of Sport and Exercise*, 19, 1-9. http://uir.ulster.ac.uk/Brick_et_al_2015_Metacog_End_Runners

Holliday, B., Burton, D., Sun, G., Hammermeister, J., Naylor, S., & Freigang, D. (2008). Building the better mental training mousetrap: Is periodization a more systematic approach to promoting performance excellence?. *Journal of Applied Sport Psychology*, 20(2), 199-219.

Hanin, Yuri L. (1997). Emotions and athletic performance: Individual zones of optimal functioning model. *European Yearbook of Sport Psychology*, 1, 29-72.

Hanin, Y. L. (2000). *Emotions in sport*. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics. Henry, G. (2015) In the hours before a World Cup final you can't coach players - you just have to trust them (In Press), *The Guardian*. <http://www.theguardian.com/sport/2015/oct/30/rugby-world-cup-final-australia-new-zealand>

Ericsson, K. A., Krampe, R. T., & Tesch-Römer, C. (1993). The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance. *Psychological review*, 100(3), 363.

Napier I. (2016). *Gilbert Enoka rides rough journey to inspire New Zealand rugby revolution*. <http://www.stuff.co.nz/Gilbert-Enoka-rides-rough-journey-to-inspire-New-Zealand-rugby-revolution>

